

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR RH ZA

SUBJ: CHONA ON THE FRONTLINE MEETING

SUMMARY: IN HURRIED MEETING, CHONA SAID THAT ASSURANCES ON END TO THE ARMED STRUGGLE IN FRONTLINE COMMUNIQUE APPLIED TO BEGINNING OF INTERIM GOVT; FRONTLINE WAS POSITIVE TOWARDS RICHARD PROPOSALS BUT WOULD INSIST ON PRIME MINISTER AND WAS OPPOSED TO SECURITY COUNCIL; PATRIOTIC FRONT WAS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY ON FORM OF INTERIM GOVT. ON NAMIBIA HE SAID SWAPO DEMANDS WOULD BE FORWARDED SOON TO THE SECRETARY. IT WOULD INSIST ON RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, A STATEMENT FROM SOUTH AFRICA THAT IT WOULD WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM NAMIBIA LATER AND PARTICIPATION AT GENEVA BY THREE PARTIES ONLY: THE UN, SWAPO AND SOUTH AFRICA. SWAPO WAS URGED AND ACCEPTED FRONTLINE ADVICE TO PURSUE AGREEMENT ON GENEVA CONFERENCE. END SUMMARY.

1. I HAD A HURRIED 45 MINUTES WITH MARK CHONA IN BETWEEN CALLS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND JUST BEFORE KAUNDA AND CHONA WERE TO RECEIVE RICHARD. HIS REMARKS COULD HARDLY BE DESCRIBED AS AN ORGANIZED OR COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE FRONTLINE MEETING. NEVERTHELESS, SOME INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT POINTS WERE MADE.

2. RHODESIA. ON THE ASSURANCE IN THE COMMUNIQUE THAT THE ARMED STRUGGLE WOULD CEASE, CHONA EXPLAINED THAT THE CONDITION "REMOVAL

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OF COLONIALISM" DID NOT MEAN THAT A CEASEFIRE WOULD HAVE TO AWAIT FULL INDEPENDENCE. THE INTERIM REGIME, HE SAID, BEING BASED ON A BLACK MAJORITY AND ON SELF-GOVERNMENT, IMPLIED THAT THE COLONIAL CONDITION NO LONGER EXISTED AS, HE SAID, IT DID IN ZAMBIA'S OWN CASE. BESIDES, IF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT (PF) WAS A PARTY TO THE AGREEMENT IN GENEVA IT OBVIOUSLY WOULD NOT CONTINUE THE FIGHTING. THE WHOLE POINT, HE SAID, OF THE RECOGNITION OF THE PF WAS TO

FORESTALL THE POSSIBILITY OF INTERVENTION BY FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES. MACHEL WAS PARTICULARLY ADAMANT ON THE SUBJECT. HE WOULD PERMIT NO FOREIGN TROOPS IN MOZAMBIQUE AND FELT THAT THIS WAS THE BEST WAY TO KEEP THEM AWAY.

3. CHONA SAID THE FRONTLINE CONSIDERED THE RICHARD PROPOSALS AND ON THE WHOLE THOUGHT THEY WERE POSITIVE. IT HAD A COUPLE OF OBJECTIONS: FIRST WAS THE IDEA OF NOT HAVING A PRIME MINISTER-- THE FRONTLINE FELT STRONGLY THERE SHOULD BE ONE; SECOND, THEY DID NOT LIKE THE IDEA OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL. IN GENERAL THEY BELIEVED THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HAD TOO MUCH POWER. HE, THE THREE SERVICE CHIEFS AND SMITH WOULD CONSTITUTE A MAJORITY OF THE NSC. BEYOND THAT ZIPA WOULD BE REPRESENTED BY ONLY THE TWO PF LEADERS WHO WOULD BE, IN EFFECT, PUTTING THEIR ARMY AT THE DISPOSITION OF SEVEN OTHERS. THE IMPORTANT POINT TO ALL THIS HOWEVER, CHONA SAID, WAS THAT THE PF WAS PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE SERIOUSLY WITH SMITH FROM THIS STAGE ON.

4. NAMIBIA. THE FRONTLINE URGED SWAPO TO CONSIDER THE GENEVA CONFERENCE SERIOUSLY. SWAPO AGREED THAT IT WOULD GIVE PRIMARY ATTENTION TO THE EFFORT TO CONVENE THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. CHONA READ RAPIDLY FROM A LIST OF SWAPO DEMANDS WHICH WERE DRAWN UP DURING THE MEETING. HE SAID THE LIST WOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO THE SECRETARY THOUGH IT HAD NOT YET BEEN DECIDED HOW. NYERERE MIGHT PASS IT ON IN DAR OR MACHEL IN MAPUTO. BASICALLY THERE WERE THREE AREAS OF CONCERN. FIRST SWAPO INSISTED THAT ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, DETAINEES AND RESTRICTEES BE RELEASED SINCE A NUMBER OF THEM WOULD PROBABLY BECOME MEMBERS OF ITS DELEGATION. WHEN I SAID I THOUGHT TO ASK FOR THE RELEASE OF
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ALL PRISONERS MIGHT CREATE A PROBLEM SINCE THERE COULD ALWAYS BE ONE OR TWO AGAINST WHOM SERIOUS CHARGES WERE BEING MADE, CHONA EMPHASIZED THE WORD "POLITICAL". THOSE UNDER CRIMINAL CHARGE WOULD NOT BE INCLUDED. SECOND, SWAPO INSISTS THAT SOUTH AFRICA STATE BEFOREHAND ITS AGREEMENT TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM NAMIBIA AND ITS WILLINGNESS TO DISCUSS THE TIMING AND MODALITIES AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. THIRD, SWAPO INSISTS THAT THERE BE THREE PARTIES AT THE CONFERENCE: IT CHAIRMAN WHO WAS EITHER TO BE AN OFFICIAL OF THE UN OR SPECIFICALLY DESIGNATED BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL, SWAPO AND SOUTH AFRICA. THE SOUTH AFRICAN SIDE COULD INCLUDE AS MANY AS DESIRED.

5. CHONA NOTED THAT SWAPO HAD MADE A MAJOR CONCESSION WITH POINT NUMBER TWO. IT WAS NO LONGER DEMANDING IMMEDIATE MILITARY WITHDRAWAL. HE THEN WENT ON AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT THE FACT THAT THIS WAS DIRECTLY FROM SWAPO. HE SAID THE FRONTLINE WAS CONCERNED AT THE PHRASEOLOGY IN THE SECRETARY'S LETTER WHICH INDICATED THAT HE WAS CONVINCED THAT SOUTH AFRICA WAS PREPARED TO AGREE TO PRISONERS RELEASE, ETC. THE FRONTLINE WANTED MORE THAN THE

SECRETARY'S JUDGMENT; THEY WANTED AN ASSURANCE THAT THE SOUTH AFRICANS HAD AGREED TO THESE VARIOUS THINGS. HOWEVER, CHONA PUT THE WHOLE THING IN TERMS OF A QUESTION: DID THE SECRETARY BELIEVE THAT CONDITIONS NOW EXISTED TO CALL THE CONFERENCE? IF HE DID, THEN HE SOULD MAKE THE ANNOUNCEMENT AND SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD START FREEING THE PRISONERS.

6. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT ALL THIS WILL BE SPELLED OUT IN A COMMUNICATION WHICH WILL BE TRANSMITTED TO THE SECRETARY AND OF COURSE CHONA WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS IT AT GREATER LENGTH AND UNDER LESS HECTIC CONDITIONS WHEN HE SEES THE SECRETARY ON THE 14TH (HIS ASSUMPTIONS).

7. DEPT PLEASE PASS NAIROBI AND DAR FOR EDMONDSON. LOW

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